

**HUMBOLDT COUNTY**

**Site name:** Punta Gorda State Marine Reserve

**Year established:** 1994

**Approximate Area:** 1.97 nm<sup>2</sup>

**Approximate Shoreline length:** 1.74 nm

**Approximate Depth range (feet):** 18 to 180

**Habitat types:** Dominated by sand with some hard bottom; in a vigorous upwelling zone. Large wash rock (Gorda Rock) and a few subtidal pinnacles offshore.

**Surrounding habitat types:** Larger rocky habitat areas to the north near Cape Mendocino. Mattole Submarine Canyon is 2 miles north of the boundary. Spanish and Delgada Submarine Canyons are to the south. Canyon habitats are rocky with soft substrate on their slopes.

**Summary of existing regulations:** No take; no disturbance of bottom; no boats (except in transit), diving or other use except approved scientific research; public entry restricted.

**Primary objectives:** To satisfy requirements of the Marine Resources Protection Act of 1990 the Fish and Game Commission was required to establish four ecological reserves along the mainland coast; the King Range State Marine Reserve was one of the reserves established pursuant to the Act. The Act specified that the specific purpose of these reserves was "to provide for scientific research related to the management and enhancement of marine resources".

**Existing Enforcement:** This area is too remote to monitor on a regular basis (20-30 mi. to nearest port). Access is very difficult and ocean conditions are unsuitable most of the time for at sea patrol. Patrol from shore is not possible due to lack of road access.

**Baseline and ongoing monitoring and research studies:** 9, 84

**Basic Evaluation:** This MPA currently protects a small amount of rocky habitat which is unique in its encrusting invertebrate assemblage. Suitable habitat for nearshore finfish species of management concern is sparse within the MPA. The MPA also has low algal abundance due to high turbidity and sand scour. Karpov et al. (2001a) observed no red abalone within the MPA and very few red sea urchins. This report also recommended relocation of the MPA to an area with habitats more suitable for species of management concern, and to allow better access to the MPA for research and enforcement.

**Published references related to effectiveness of this MPA:** 85

**Published references related to use of this MPA as a research tool:** 84